



Center for Medicaid and State Operations

TO: State Medicaid Directors
State Directors for Agencies Administering the HCBS Waivers

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SUBJ: HCBS Quality Communication # 8
Risk Management and Quality in HCBS: Individual Risk Planning and Prevention, System-Wide Quality Improvement

DATE: February 24, 2005

This communication is part of our on-going effort to share information that can positively impact the quality of services and supports provided through the Medicaid Home and Community-based Waiver (HCBS) program to people who are elderly and disabled.

In earlier communications, we announced the availability of several HCBS Quality Tools including the *HCBS Quality Framework*, the *HCBS Work Book: Improving the Quality of Home and Community Based Services and Supports*, and the *Participant Experience Surveys (PES)* – Elderly/Disabled and MR/DD Versions.

This communication transmits the another resource, ***Risk Management and Quality in HCBS: Individual Risk Planning and Prevention, System-Wide Quality Improvement.***

The vast array of opportunities and experiences in our communities makes risk a part of all of our lives. Therefore, risks, and the need to manage them, are part of providing community-based services and supports to people with disabilities and is a key feature of managing quality in a home and community-based services system.

Successful risk management for individuals on HCBS waivers involves three interrelated steps: identifying and documenting risks and developing written, individualized plans for addressing them; ongoing monitoring of risk levels and risk management strategies, along with training of key staff; and analysis of individual risk and risk management strategies to provide states with the evidence to develop a system-wide risk management strategy, and to continuously improve the quality of their programs.

Risk Management and Quality in HCBS was developed by MEDSTAT, the National Contractor for Quality in Home and Community-Based Waiver Services under contract with CMS. This publication provides information and ideas about managing risk at the individual and systems level by exploring risk management themes and emerging issues, describing how a number of states that serve at least one of four waiver populations (the elderly, people with physical disabilities, mental retardation and/or developmental disabilities or brain injuries) are currently addressing risk for waiver participants, and identifying state tools or policies that can be useful to other states.

All of the former Quality Letters and the HCBS Quality Tools are available on the CMS website at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicaid/waivers/quality.asp>. These and additional materials are also available on www.hcbs.org.

As always, we invite your feedback about the ***Risk Management and Quality in HCBS*** and about all of our quality communications, which you can send to us via e-mail at hcbsquality@cms.hhs.gov.